



WORKERS DEFENSE LEAGUE

112 EAST 19TH STREET NEW YORK 3, N. Y. ALGONQUIN 4-4953

REV. DONALD HARRINGTON
president

HARRY FLEISCHMAN
chairman of the board

GEORGE S. COUNTS
treasurer

VERA RONY
national secretary

VICE PRESIDENTS

JOSEPH A. BEIRNE

JAMES B. CAREY

PATRICK B. GORMAN

SAL B. HOFFMANN

A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

GENERAL COUNSEL

JOHN F. FINERTY

FRANCIS HEISLER

CARL RACHLIN

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

LUIGI ANTONINI

SHELLEY APPLETON

KATRINA McCORMICK BARNES

DANIEL BELL

ROBERT BENDINER

ALGERNON BLACK

ALBERT H. BLUMENTHAL

THOMAS CAREY

JACOB CLAYMAN

OSCAR COHEN

GEORGE COLLINS

MOSHE DECTER

C. L. DELLUMS

JOHN W. EDELMAN

BERNARD ENGLANDER

LES FINNEGAN

WILLIAM FITELSON

SAMUEL H. FRIEDMAN

REVEREND ARON S. GILMARTIN

RABBI ROLAND B. GITTELSON

ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG

RABBI ROBERT GORDIS

EDWARD GRAY

MURRAY GROSS

HENRY HASIWAR

PAUL R. HAYS

PHILIP H. HELLER

STANLEY M. ISAACS

GARDNER JACKSON

JOEL R. JACOBSON

E. T. KEHRER

MURRAY KEMPTON

MILTON R. KONVITZ

FRIEDA LANGER

ALTON LEVY

NORMAN MAILER

EMIL MAZEY

BENJAMIN F. McLAURIN

MORRIS MILGRAM

NATHANIEL M. MINKOFF

H. L. MITCHELL

DR. VON MIZELL

HOWARD MOLISANI

WALTER MUELDER

EMANUEL MURAVCHIK

ROBIN MYERS

RICHARD PARRISH

ROSE PESOTTA

JOSEPH L. RAUH, JR.

VICTOR G. REUTHER

LEON SCHACHTER

MEYER SCHAPIRO

BENJAMIN SEGAL

CLARENCE SENIOR

BRENDAN SEXTON

FRANCIS SHANE

BORIS SHISHKIN

PAUL SIFTON

HANS SIMONS

EDWARD J. SPARLING

WILLIAM STERN

NORMAN THOMAS

ROWLAND WATTS

ROY WILKINS

PEARL WILLEN

MORTON WISHENGRAD

JERRY WURF

JAMES E. YOUNGDAHL

ARNOLD S. ZANDER

CAROLA WEINGARTEN
administrative secretary

a. w. o. c.

March 3, 1961

RECEIVED
DEPT. OF ORG.

MAR 6 1961

Mr. Franz Daniels
AFL - CIO
815 16th Street NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Franz,

I enclose a long-range proposal for replacing Public Law #78 by a constructive U.S.-Mexican technical assistance program which will ease the blow of the reduction and elimination of Public Law #78 on the Mexican economy, if all of our efforts to defeat the law bear some fruit.

This project was developed by Senior, Ben Stehpansky, Serafino Romualdi and myself, and Dr. Graham is now attempting to get the ear of the ICA for it. We think it represents a constructive transition, free of the exploitive grip of the growers.

Clarence will be referring to this project, without going into details during his testimony for WDL before the Gathings Sub-committee on March 7th. He and I want to be sure that this clears with you, although we have already cleared with Serafino, who thinks it is a good way to placate the Mexicans while doing them some good. Naturally it will take a lot of working out, but we feel that the U.S. might get some very bad political results in Mexico if we do not take the trouble. If any part of this worries you, call me on Monday.

Congratulations on a tremendous campaign in the Imperial Valley -- I wish the growers had not shoved the braceros into the scape-goat positions as usual.

With affection,

Vera

Vera Rony

VR/rh



WORKERS DEFENSE LEAGUE

112 EAST 19TH STREET NEW YORK 3, N. Y. ALGONQUIN 4-4953

a. W. O. C.

REV. DONALD HARRINGTON
president

HARRY FLEISCHMAN
chairman of the board

GEORGE S. COUNTS
treasurer

VERA RONY
national secretary

VICE PRESIDENTS

JOSEPH A. BEIRNE

JAMES B. CAREY

PATRICK B. GORMAN

SAL B. HOFFMANN

A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

GENERAL COUNSEL

JOHN F. FINERTY

FRANCIS HEISLER

CARL RACHLIN

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

LUIGI ANTONINI

SHELLEY APPLETON

KATRINA McCORMICK BARNES

DANIEL BELL

ROBERT BENDINER

ALGERNON BLACK

ALBERT H. BLUMENTHAL

THOMAS CAREY

JACOB CLAYMAN

OSCAR COHEN

GEORGE COLLINS

MOSHE DECTER

C. L. DELLUMS

JOHN W. EDELMAN

BERNARD ENGLANDER

LES FINNEGAN

WILLIAM FITELSON

SAMUEL H. FRIEDMAN

REVEREND ARON S. GILMARTIN

RABBI ROLAND B. GITTELSON

ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG

RABBI ROBERT GORDIS

EDWARD GRAY

MURRAY GROSS

HENRY HASIWAR

PAUL R. HAYS

PHILIP H. HELLER

STANLEY M. ISAACS

GARDNER JACKSON

JOEL R. JACOBSON

E. T. KEHRER

MURRAY KEMPTON

MILTON R. KONVITZ

FRIEDA LANGER

ALTON LEVY

NORMAN MAILER

EMIL MAZEY

BENJAMIN F. McLAURIN

MORRIS MILGRAM

NATHANIEL M. MINKOFF

H. L. MITCHELL

DR. VON MIZELL

HOWARD MOLISANI

WALTER MUELDER

EMANUEL MURAVCHIK

ROBIN MYERS

RICHARD PARRISH

ROSE PESOTTA

JOSEPH L. RAUH, JR.

VICTOR G. REUTHER

LEON SCHACHTER

MEYER SCHAPIRO

BENJAMIN SEGAL

CLARENCE SENIOR

BRENDAN SEXTON

FRANCIS SHANE

BORIS SHISHKIN

PAUL SIFTON

HANS SIMONS

EDWARD J. SPARLING

WILLIAM STERN

NORMAN THOMAS

ROWLAND WATTS

ROY WILKINS

PEARL WILLEN

MORTON WISHENGRAD

JERRY WURF

JAMES E. YOUNGDAHL

ARNOLD S. ZANDER

CAROLA WEINGARTEN

administrative secretary

A Proposal for a Technical Assistance Project To Help Improve, and Eventually Replace, the Mexican Labor Import Program

Public Law #78, which authorizes and helps finance the importation of seasonal farm workers from Mexico, began as an emergency measure during World War II. But it has been continued each year since the end of the war, in spite of opposition by labor and other civic groups which point to the damage inflicted by the program upon local and regional farm labor standards. A major campaign is presently being organized to block renewal of the law when it expires in June, 1961.

However, humanitarians cannot ignore the hardships this will cause in Mexico. Every year some 400,000 Mexicans come to work on farms. Their personal and family incomes are considerably greater than they would have been without such work, and the withdrawal of this income will bring about widespread misery. The Mexican balance of payments, which benefits substantially from this program, would also sustain severe loss.

These losses of personal and national income would contribute to the creation of an inflammable political situation in Mexico at a time when labor and peasant leaders throughout Latin America are being pressed to join the Castro cry of "Cuba, si; Yanquis, no!"

Thus, for both humanitarian and political reasons, those of us concerned with Latin America should lose no time in devising ways and means to compensate the Mexican economy for the loss and dislocation it would suffer were the labor import program to be limited or abolished.

The proposal which follows is one example of the kind of project which should be useful in this regard. It has, we believe, the following merits: a) it can be immediately initiated as a pilot project on a modest basis and at modest cost; b) it will be immediately useful to Mexico; c) when the Mexican economy requires compensation, this project can be expanded without prohibitive cost to the U.S. government.

I. We should begin to use the Mexican bracero program as a technical assistance instrument. Thus Mexico would select a given number of braceros whose job would be pre-selected in such ways as to give them experience with those crops, farm machines, and agricultural techniques which would be most useful to Mexican agriculture.

p. 2. A Proposal for a Technical Assistance Project -- Public Law
78

II. After this selected group has completed its work period, the U.S. government would set up a "short course" institute, such as agricultural colleges regularly do for our farmers, to round out the braceros' work experience, with instruction of a practical nature adapted to the problems they, as farmers, will face in Mexico.

III. After these trained men return home, an American technical assistance program in Mexico would follow up the training they received in the U.S. to make sure that the new knowledge was being properly adapted to Mexican agriculture and being put to the optimum economic use.

IV. An additional way of utilizing these trained men would be as instructors on Mexican farm cooperatives where their U.S. experience would be relevant. This again could be planned as a joint effort of the Mexican government and U.S. technical assistance.

This project is proposed as only one example of the kind of practical undertaking which would make possible a constructive, orderly and humane reduction and termination of the Public Law #78 program.

* * *